

THE LONG VIEW: A Portrait of Ruth Bader Ginsburg

by Mike Telin



“Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you.”

— Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg,
aka Notorious RBG

On Thursday, April 18 at 7:00 pm in Cleveland State University’s Drinko Recital Hall, pianist Angelin Chang, soprano Patrice Michaels, and classical music producer James Ginsburg will present Michaels’ *THE LONG VIEW: A Portrait of Ruth Bader Ginsburg in Nine Songs*. The cycle serves as the centerpiece of this one-act, 75-minute dramatic concert

which also includes works by Vivian Fung, Stacy Garrop, Lee Hoiby, Lori Laitman, and John Musto as well as projection designs by Yee Eun Nam. A Question & Answer session will follow the performance. Admission is free and open to the public.

This nine-song cycle by Michaels (daughter-in-law of RBG) brings to light many aspects of Justice Ginsburg’s personal and professional life through letters, remembrances, conversations, and court opinions. The cycle has been recorded by Michaels for Cedille Records, the Chicago-based label of James Ginsburg (son of RBG). The album [Notorious RBG in Song](#) is available from Cedille.

“Thursday’s concert creates a wonderful picture of Ruth Bader Ginsburg as a person,” Angelin Chang said during a telephone conversation. “This is a great event for RBG fans as well as classical music aficionados.”

Chang, who heads CSU's keyboard studies program and teaches music and law, noted that there will be a special appearance by Lee Fisher, Dean of the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law. "He and Patrice will provide spoken narration that will take you through her [RBG's] life."

In addition to Michaels' song cycle, other works based on Ginsburg's life include Stacy Garrop's *My Dearest Ruth*, based on the love letter the Justice's husband Marty wrote before his death in 2010. Vivian Fung's *Pot Roast à la RBG*, set to a text by Ginsburg's daughter Jane, is a guide for preparing the beef dish, using the Justice's own words.

Chang said that although she has known James Ginsburg and Patrice Michaels for some time, the idea for this collaboration came about after a conversation she had with Lee Fischer. "He had just seen the documentary on RBG and was quite taken by it. I happened to mention that I knew her son, and he said it would be great to make something happen."

Because of the changing role that women are playing in society, Thursday's concert is personally significant to Chang, who won the 2007 Grammy Award for Best Instrumental Soloist Performance with Orchestra. "I'm very proud to be the first female American classical pianist and the first of Asian descent to win a Grammy," she said.

Chang, who serves as Vice President of the Board of Governors of The Recording Academy, Chicago Chapter, earned a Juris Doctor degree from Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, making her uniquely qualified to provide insight into what makes Ruth Bader Ginsburg notorious.

"I think that the song *Anita's Story* is the best way to describe that," she said. The song is based on a letter from a typist who was in Marty Ginsburg's law firm. When Ruth Bader Ginsburg was leading the legal fight for women's rights, Anita was often asked to type RBG's legal briefs. "Anita couldn't believe that RBG was talking about gender-based discrimination and all these things that most people wouldn't even address. But RBG dared to do that — in her own way. She's always done something outspoken, but in a seemingly under-spoken way. And I *do* mean seemingly," Chang said.

In addition to Thursday's performance, there will be a free session titled "[Legal Developments in the New Era of Music Production](#)" on Tuesday, April 16 at 4:00 pm at Cleveland-Marshall College of Law. In addition to Chang, James Ginsburg, and Patrice Michaels, panelists include Paul Farberman (entertainment attorney), Jim

Brickman (musician), and John Kellogg (attorney and program director, music business master of arts, at the Berklee College of Music).

At 5:00 pm on Tuesday, James Ginsburg will host [“Ruth Bader Ginsburg: a discussion.”](#)

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